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## HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE.

THE events at this establishment have been the *débûts* of Madame de Meric Lablache (who stamped herself at once as a genuine artist by her excellent impersonation of *Azucena*, in *Il Trovatore*.) and Mr. Hohler, who made his appearance in *I Puritani*, and notwithstanding the many reminiscences of former tenors in the same part, achieved a genuine success. Mr. Hohler is evidently strange to the stage, and has much to learn; but he has an excellent voice, of remarkable purity in the upper notes, and sings in a style free from exaggeration. We shall be glad to welcome him in a part less associated with recollections of bygone artists; and meanwhile trust that the applause with which he was overwhelmed on his first appearance may have the healthy effect of stimulating him to unwearied exertion in the path he has chosen. Weber's Opera, *Der Freischütz*, has introduced Madlle. Titiens for the first time this season; and we need scarcely say that she was received with all the enthusiasm due to one who has so steadily won the sympathy of the audience, and so long and worthily preserved it.

## ROYAL ITALIAN OPERA.

No great sensation has yet been produced by the new singers selected by Mr. Gye for trial. The opening night was devoted to Verdi's Opera, *Un ballo in Maschera*, in which Madlle. Fricci sang better than we have yet heard her; and Signor Mario was in such uncertain voice throughout the evening that few would have recognised the tenor who for so many years has held undisputed sway at this establishment. He took his revenge, however, a few nights afterwards in *Il Trovatore*, many parts of which, especially the expressive "Ah! sì, ben mio," were given with all his wonted power and finish. Madlle. Morensi, a new comer, was extremely well received as the Gipsy in the same Opera, and is likely to become a favorite in the company. Madlle. Orgeni has also made a successful *débüt* in *La Traviata*, displaying a good voice and much feeling for acting, although the repulsive nature of the character she selected gave but little legitimate scope for her powers, especially as the misery of the unfortunate *Violetta* is too traditional to allow of any original reading. Signor Francelli, who made his first appearance as *Alfredo*, has an agreeable voice, and achieved a moderate success. On the 19th ult., Madlle. Pauline Lucca appeared for the first time this season as *Margherita*, in Gounod's *Faust*, and met with a most cordial reception.

## MUSICAL SOCIETY.

THE interesting feature at the second concert of this Society, on the 11th ult., was the performance of Mr. A. S. Sullivan's new Symphony in E, about which expectation had been so raised that almost all the musical celebrities in London were present. We can scarcely hope that so young a composer—who can never listen to his work without also hearing the indiscriminate applause which accompanies it—will ever be enabled to subject his Symphony to that rigid examination which he doubtless bestows upon the compositions of others; but there can be little doubt that, even with the talent he undoubtedly possesses, unless he has already discovered that art manufactured to catch the praise of the moment is not the art that will live, there can be little chance of his advancement. Even the early compositions of the great masters show that constructive power, and innate genius for the development of an idea, invariably accompanied the faculty of producing melodies; and the history of art will prove to us that mere choice of subject does not make a work immortal: Beethoven's Symphony in C minor does not live by its melody, nor Shakespeare's *Hamlet* by its story. We may at once say that the principal merit of Mr. Sullivan's Symphony is the manner in which he handles the orchestra. With an undue fondness for the brass instruments, he still manages to produce some excellent, and we may add novel, effects by combinations; the trombones and horns, especially, being put to a purely legitimate use. The first *Allegro*, in E minor, preceded by a short, and by no means winning, introduction, is bold and, towards the close, cleverly worked out; but the gem of the Symphony is the *Andante*, which is so charmingly instrumented, and based upon so pleasing a theme, that we are disposed to forgive its want of originality. The *Allegretto* has a catching pastoral air, which palls by repetition; but all who love mere tune have an ample feast, and the prolonged applause at the end of the movement showed that the majority were satisfied. The *Finale*, in E major, is dashing and effective, and, without any points of striking interest, is in thorough keeping with the rest of the work.

Although we consider this Symphony remarkable as a bold experiment by a young composer, we are by no means inclined to believe that it is a step in the right direction. Mr. Sullivan's unquestionable talent should make him doubly careful not to mistake popular applause for artistic appreciation. An earnest study of the best works of the best composers will convince him that a great work does not consist of a crowd of ideas, but of a few arranged in symmetrical proportion. Self-examination is better than production, at an early part of an artist's career; and if Mr. Sullivan be not already spoiled by undue laudation, there is every hope for his future.

The rest of the concert consisted of a Violoncello Concerto, by Schumann (which, not having been put into the fire by its composer, should have been duly placed there by his admirers), played to perfection by Signor Piatti. Weber's Overture to *Der Freischütz*, so magnificently performed as to elicit an *encore*, and Mehul's characteristic overture "Le jeune Henri." The vocalists were Miss Robertine Henderson and Mr. Cummings.

## MR. WILLIAM JACKSON.

WE regret sincerely to have to record the death of a man who, perhaps more than any other of the townsmen of Bradford, notwithstanding the humble position he occupied, lived in the respect and esteem of the whole community. The life of William Jackson is interwoven with our means of elevation and enjoyment, inasmuch as, not only by his own direct efforts, but by the influence of his example, and by the *prestige* of his name, he has done much to build up that musical interest in the town which is a marked feature of Bradford society, and a source of culture and refinement to all classes.

Mr. Jackson's life was full of incident. He was born on the 9th of January, 1816, at Masham, and he always cherished a warm affection for the place of his birth, and the neighbourhood in which his early years were spent. He was the son of a miller, and was himself, as a lad, a hard worker in the corn mill. He was not many years old when his passion for music—the ruling passion of his whole life—began to reveal itself. As early as eight years old we are told of the rapture he enjoyed in being present at a great bell-ringing match at Masham. In a notice of his early career, which appeared in *Eliza Cook's Journal* many years ago, are some interesting particulars of his younger days, some of which we may transfer to this memoir. In the old parish church, at Masham, was a barrel-organ, which was at once a great mystery and delight to the boy, then not eight years old. To admit the sound well into the church the doors were thrown open behind, and from the gallery he used to delight to watch the stops, pipes, barrels, staples, keyboard, jacks, and all the machinery which was nakedly exposed to view. About this time he went to live with his grandmother at Tanfield Mill, a few miles off, and here he commenced his musical career by learning to play an old fife, which had belonged to his father, formerly a fifer in the Masham Volunteers. This fife, however, would not sound D, which was a great trouble to the lad, but his mother removed the difficulty by providing him with a one-keyed flute, and shortly after a gentleman in the neighbourhood gave him a flute with four silver keys, which was a great stroke of good luck, and he blew away joyfully. But he was meanwhile making no way in "book-learning," as his friends thought, and so he was sent off to a school at Pateley Bridge. There he sought out his most congenial society, and found it in a club of village singers, at Brigham Gate. They put into his hands the old soft-faing gamut, and drilled him into the reading of music, in which he soon became a greater proficient than in the reading of books. His progress astonished them all; and he returned from school full of musical notions. He contrived to get the use of an old jingling spinet, and learned to play upon it, although the melody was very unsatisfactory. He became ambitious of possessing a finger-organ, but wanted the means to procure it. However, about this time, a neighbouring parish clerk had purchased, for an insignificant sum, a small disabled barrel-organ, that had travelled the northern counties with a show. The clerk, relying on his mechanical and musical skill, felt confident that he could revive its tones; but in spite of all his efforts, he could only get from it a sound that was neither scream, grunt, nor groan, but a combination of all three. At last, in despair, he placed it in a donkey cart and brought it to the house in which our young musician lived, who, though yet a mere boy, had gained some little celebrity by his alterations and improvements in the hand organ of the parish church of Masham. He at once set to work upon it, and found that its chief disease was "an affection of the windpipe." He promised, however, to have it ready for use in a week, and sure enough, when the old clerk called at the end of that time, he was astonished at the completeness of the cure, and was moved, even to tears, by the old airs which it played. The clerk joyfully gave the lad a sovereign, the first golden fruits of his musical and mechanical skill. And now the thought haunted him strangely that he could *make* an organ! His father and he set to work to construct a barrel-organ; but, though both of them could chop sticks well enough, neither of them could use a jack-plane so as to plane straight and square. By dint, however, of hard labour and through many failures, they at last succeeded;—first making the bellows, then the pipes (a still more difficult work), then the diapasons, then the wind-chest, and next of all the minor mechanical mysteries; and the issue was, that in the course of three or four months, they had constructed a hand-organ that played ten tunes very decently. The organ was the wonder of the neighbourhood, and many country visitors called to see it and hear it play. Other organs were sent in to repair, and an old gentleman at Pateley Bridge gave the mechanics an order to put him a lot of sacred music on a barrel he had got made, which was accomplished very much to his satisfaction. His next ambition was a five-stop finger-organ; he set to work on its construction, and made it—his brother purchasing for him the keys of an old harpsichord. At the same time he begged some old-fashioned music in loose sheets, which proved to be "Boyce's Cathedral Music," and was of great ultimate service to him. He learned to play it, and also possessed himself of a copy of "Callcott's Grammar of Thorough Bass," which he studied and mastered. During all this time, the boy was engaged in daily hard work as a miller, and during summer worked in the fields. The only time he had for practising music was during the noon hour and in the evening, about half an hour at dinner, and an hour or two at night. He next tried his hand at composing, and a dozen little anthems, which the lad composed, were carried by a friend who took an interest in him, to the late Mr. Camidge, the organist at York Minster, and shown to him as the production of a "miller's lad of fourteen." Mr. Camidge marked the objectionable passages, such as contained consecutive fifths, eighths, &c., with pencil, pointing out how they might be improved, and returned them with the encouraging remarks that they "did the young man great credit," and he must "go on writing." A military band was

formed about this time at Masham, and he walked there and back twice a week to practice. He wrote tunes for this band; and he played, first, the 3rd clarinet, next the trumpet, then the keyed bugle, and in succession, the bass horn, the French horn, the leading clarinet, the corneopane, the tenor trombone,—in fact, he played every instrument by turns, according as an instrument had to be supplied by the loss of one of the band. He thus acquired a good practical knowledge of every instrument, which gave him great facility in afterwards arranging for an orchestra, and in producing striking instrumental effects. To these varied accomplishments he afterwards added those of performing on the violin, viola, violoncello and double bass, though on no one of these instruments would he be pronounced to be at all a first-rate performer. At this time the lord of the manor of Masham presented to the church a finger organ in the place of the old barrel organ now worn out, and young Jackson was appointed organist in the year 1832, at a salary of £30 a year. In the meantime he was acting as a journeyman miller at a wage of 3s. 6d. a week. This was a great lift to the young aspirant, who got on surprisingly, labouring hard in the evenings at the study of music. By means of a circulating library in Leeds, he became conversant with the works of Mozart, Haydn, Spohr, and Mendelssohn, preferring to study the full scores when he could.

In the year 1839 Mr. Jackson went into business at Masham as a fallow chandler, in partnership with Mr. Ascough, the present Mayor of Ripon, and continued in the business, we believe, for the twelve or thirteen years of his life which intervened before he came to Bradford. During all this period he followed the study and practice of music as his principal recreation, and found time for not a little composition. In 1839 he published his fine anthem, "For joy let fertile valleys sing." The next year his glee, "The Sisters of the Sea" gained the first prize of the Huddersfield Glee Club; and in the year following he composed the 103rd Psalm, written for the full orchestra, for the Huddersfield Choral Society. In addition to these minor works, and many others, he wrote in his spare time during this period of his life what may be called his master-piece—the oratorio of the "Deliverance of Israel from Babylon." It was published in three parts during 1844-5, the last chorus being completed on his 29th birthday. This work is well-known to the Bradford musical public. It was first performed here, before the friends of the Church Institute, in the year 1847, and has been given several times since in Bradford, and in all the West Riding towns, with uniform success; also in London, Liverpool, &c. At a subsequent date, not precisely fixable, yet before leaving Masham, he wrote a second work of equal magnitude—also an Oratorio—entitled the "Isaiah." It was published in the year 1851, but not produced, we believe, at first,—at all events not in Bradford till some years later.

It was in May, 1852, that Mr. Jackson came to settle in Bradford, to take up as his profession what had always been the delight of his leisure hours. He entered into partnership with Mr. Winn, as a music-seller, succeeding to the business of Messrs. Hopkinson, at the bottom of Cheapside, and has continued in the business till the time of his death. His public career in Bradford is well known to all. He has held an appointment as organist during the whole of his connection with the town—first at St. John's Church, and for the last ten years at Horton Lane Chapel. He succeeded Mr. Winn as conductor of the Choral Union, a chorus of male voices only, on the principle of the Cologne Choral Union, a post which he held till the Union was dissolved, when the members, as a testimonial of the esteem in which they held him and their gratitude to him as conductor and teacher, presented to him a valuable gold watch and chain. Mr. Jackson was appointed the first conductor of the Festival Choral Society at its formation after the Festival of 1856, and it is by his training the society has earned the position of which all Bradford is proud, of ranking second to no body of chorallists in the kingdom.

During his residence here, and amid his multifarious duties, he contrived to do a very considerable amount of literary work. For the Festival of 1856 Mr. Jackson set to music again the 103rd Psalm, portions of which were greatly praised for the musical talent displayed, by both metropolitan and provincial critics. He also wrote a Cantata, called "The Year," for the Bradford Festival of 1859, and the ovation he received at its production was among the warmest of the many warm ones he received from his fellow-townsmen. A few years ago he brought out a book of Psalm Tunes for peculiar meters and chants, most of them his own composition, and many of them of singular beauty and among the gems of all his writings. More recently still he has harmonised the Bradford Tune Book, compiled by Mr. S. Smith, a task which represents no small amount of close labour. And his last work is a Cantata, only just completed, and not yet published, entitled "The praise of Music;" it was to have been first performed at the Spring concert of the Festival Choral Society, which was postponed on account of his illness. In this work Mr. Jackson was his own poet, the words and music being both by himself. We have noticed his principal writings, but by no means his only ones. A Church Service and Anthems, a Mass in C, a number of glees, part-songs, songs, and anthems (one of the latest for the opening of the new organ at Horton Lane Chapel), and a Manual of Singing, which has been an invaluable instructor for thousands, and has run through many editions, have all been the outcome of his busy pen, and versatile, active brain.

Mr. Jackson, we are sorry to say, leaves behind him a widow and nine children to mourn his loss, the youngest being only five days old. The thoughtful kindness with which the Festival Choral Society has undertaken the care of the funeral is no small relief to the overburdened relatives. Something more than this, however, remains to be done, and Bradford will not have fulfilled its obligations to one who has written his mark deeper in our social fabric

than any one of his contemporaries during these fourteen years, until it has consecrated to the service of his widow and fatherless children some portion of the wealth which during this time it has accumulated.

There was a public service at Horton Lane Chapel at eleven o'clock, on the day of the funeral, with a musical service, the Society of course being present. The programme of the music included a tune by Mr. S. Smith, "Macpelah," to the words of Montgomery, "Friend after friend departs;" a tune of Mr. Jackson's own composition to the hymn beginning, "Fear no more the clanking chain;" the quartet and chorus from Spohr's *Last Judgment*, "Blest are the Departed;" the chorus from *St. Paul*, "Happy and Blest are they." At the grave the chorale from *St. Paul*, "To Thee, O Lord," was sung, and at the close the Hymn No. 117, from the "Hymns ancient and modern," "Jesus lives," &c.

THE one hundred and twenty-eighth Anniversary Festival of the Royal Society of Musicians, took place at the Freemasons' Hall, on the 20th ult., John Duke Coleridge, Esq., Q.C., M.P., in the chair. The amalgamation of this Society with the Royal Society of Female Musicians, was an interesting feature in the proceedings of the day; and the event was eloquently alluded to by the President, in one of the neatest and most thoroughly genial speeches ever spoken from the chair on similar occasions. The donations and subscriptions far exceeded the usual sum obtained at these festivals, amounting to upwards of £800. Messrs. Broadwood and Sons gave £52 10s., and Messrs. Collard and Collard £50; Messrs. Ashdown and Parry, and Messrs. Novello each contributed ten guineas; and the same sum was given by the chairman, Jules Benedict, W. Ganz, George Martin, Charles Gotobed, and by Sir Wentworth Dilke, who responded, in an appropriate speech, for the health of the "Patrons of the Society." The brother of the late Miss Masson (who was the founder of the Royal Society of Female Musicians) generously gave 200 guineas, Madame Sainton-Dolby, £50, and Mr. Henry Leslie (the proceeds of a concert of Welsh melodies) £50. Other smaller donations, many of which came from members of the Society, were also announced; and the Treasurer, Mr. G. F. Anderson, who always devotes his whole energies to the cause, had every reason to congratulate himself upon the goodly list of subscribers procured upon this occasion. The vocalists were Madame Parepa, Miss Robertine Henderson, Mr. W. H. Cummings, and a very excellent glee party, under the direction of Mr. James Coward; and the instrumentalists were Herr Pauer (pianoforte), and Herr Leopold Auer (violin), all of whom exerted themselves most successfully in the cause of the Charity.

THE Annual Report of the Choir Benevolent Fund shows that the Society continues in a state of satisfactory prosperity. We are glad to find that the several Festivals and Concerts given in aid of the Fund during the past year, have been highly successful; and it gives us also much pleasure to record that in every case where these performances have taken place, not only the buildings have been placed at the disposal of the Society, but the members of the Choir have been treated by the Dean and Chapter in the most hospitable manner. For the first time a Sermon advocating the cause of the Society was preached at Catterbury by the very Rev. the Dean, a copy of which is appended to the Report. We cordially wish the Society every success in its praiseworthy endeavours to secure a provision for its aged or invalid members, and to guarantee a fixed sum, payable at their decease, to their widows or children.

THE monument erected to the memory of the late George Linley, in Kensal Green Cemetery, and for which nearly £35 has been raised by subscription, was uncovered on the 12th ult.

WE hear that Herr Franz Abt, whose compositions are so well known to English vocalists, will arrive in London early in the present month.

A CONCERT was given on the 20th ult., at St. James's Hall, by Mr. John Cheshire (Professor of the Harp at the Royal Academy of Music), on which occasion he was assisted by all the principal Harpists in London, and by the entire Band of Her Majesty's Theatre, conducted by Signor Arditi and Mr. Alfred Mellon, and an excellent chorus. Mr. Cheshire played several times during the evening; but on no occasion with more success than in a well written Fantasia, by Parish Alvars, from *I Montecchi*, and *Semiramide*, in which he displayed not only a thorough command of his instrument, but a refinement and delicacy of execution which proved that the mind had been trained as well as the fingers. Of the Cantata, *The King and the Maiden*, composed by Mr. Cheshire, which was performed for the first time, we can only speak in general terms of commendation. Most of the solos were exceedingly well delivered by Madame Rudersdorff, Madame Laura Baxter, and Mr. W. H. Cummings, and were received with much favour by the audience. A second hearing is necessary, however, to enter more particularly into the merits of a work of such pretension. An interesting feature of the Concert was the performance of Mendelssohn's Overture to *Athalie* by the orchestra and twenty harps. The principal vocalists, besides those engaged in the Cantata, were Mr. Santley, Madame Weiss, Miss Rose Hersee, and Mr. Arthur Matthison. The Concert was in every respect highly successful.

ON Tuesday evening, in Passion week, a sacred Concert was given by the Kentish Town Church Choral Society, under the direction of Mr. Alfred Gilbert, Organist of St. John's Church. The first part of the Concert comprised a selection of solos and choruses from the *Messiah*, and the second part consisted of the *Stabat Mater*, Rossini; the principal parts being taken by Madame Gilbert, Madame Andrea, Mr. Whiffin, Mr. J. Welch, and Mr. F. F.